

Inspection of Baines School

Highcross Road, Poulton-le-Fylde, Lancashire FY6 8BE

Inspection dates: 26–27 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils said that they feel safe and that they enjoy school. Older pupils told inspectors that the school is 'massively better' than it was at the last inspection. They now consider classrooms to be places where they can learn.

In some subjects, teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve. As a result, in these subjects pupils' work is of a higher quality. That said, pupils told us that in other subjects, teachers' expectations of them are not as high as they should be, for example in mathematics.

Pupils said that behaviour is mostly good. Pupils told us that staff care and listen to them if they have a problem. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils said that staff deal with any issues 'instantly'. Pupils value the introduction of the 'buddy hub'. This provides good support for victims of bullying. Pupils explained to us how they take comfort from spending time with Rufus, the well-being dog.

Pupils of all ages are enthusiastic about the range of clubs and opportunities on offer. For example, over eighty pupils are involved in the school musical production: 'The Return of the Forbidden Planet'.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher and, more recently, other senior leaders, have made some brave decisions to improve this school. Standards at Baines School have turned a corner. However, there is more to do before pupils benefit from a good quality of education.

Pupils achieve well in several subjects, including geography, science and art. This is also true for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In these subjects, leaders ensure that this group of pupils' needs are well met. However, in some subjects, including English and mathematics, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This is because of some remaining weaknesses in how well the curriculum is planned and delivered.

Most leaders have redesigned key stage 3 curriculums well to make them more demanding for pupils. Some of these curriculum changes are embedded. Pupils can build on earlier learning. They use their prior knowledge to deepen their understanding of challenging concepts. For example, Year 7 pupils use their knowledge of shading techniques to improve their work in art.

The quality of curriculum planning and how well curriculums are delivered varies across subjects. In some subjects, pupils have been unable to benefit from a well-planned curriculum until more recently. For example, in English, leaders introduced a new curriculum in September 2019. In mathematics, the key stage 3 curriculum does not build enough on pupils' earlier learning. For instance, Year 7 pupils told us

that they find aspects of the mathematics curriculum too easy because they unnecessarily repeat content that they covered in primary school.

Some teachers use assessment well to check on learning and address pupils' errors. For example, in history, teachers use assessment effectively to check on pupils' prior knowledge of The Battle of Hastings. However, there are times when teachers do not address pupils' misconceptions. This means that some pupils face difficulties when they apply their existing knowledge to more complex learning.

Some teachers support pupils to overcome errors in their spelling and punctuation. They insist that pupils' work is of the highest quality. For instance, pupils produce high-quality work about the impact of climate change in geography. That said, there are occasions when some teachers do not insist on the same high standards. For example, some Year 9 pupils do not take enough pride in or complete their work in modern foreign languages.

Across the school, respectful relationships exist between staff and pupils. Most pupils' behaviour around school is calm. Those pupils who struggle to manage their behaviour receive timely support to improve their conduct. The proportion of pupils excluded from school for poor behaviour is reducing quickly. More pupils attend school regularly than in the past. This is also the case for disadvantaged pupils and those pupils with SEND.

Pupils appreciate the opportunity to support their local community. Many pupils work towards achieving the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Pupils are keen to become members of the student council and influence change. For instance, the student council played an important role in changing the design of the pastoral structure.

Pupils regularly give their time to raise money for local and national charities. Pupils explained to us how the curriculum helps them to learn about religions that are different to their own. Pupils also told us that the school is a tolerant and accepting community. Pupils can be open about their sexual orientation and their gender identity.

Staff are highly positive about the improvements that senior leaders have made. They say that leaders consider their well-being. Improvements in governance, since the previous inspection, mean that members of the governing body now provide an appropriate level of challenge and support to senior leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that all the necessary appointment checks are completed before new staff start work at the school. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They understand the procedures that they must follow if they have concerns about a pupil.

Pupils are confident that they can talk to an adult in school if they have any concerns. Pupils are especially appreciative of the high-quality pastoral support on

offer. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils learn about the dangers of drug misuse and how to look after their own mental health.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders do not ensure that their curriculum is well planned and sequenced with the most appropriate content. In these subjects, pupils do not achieve well. Subject leaders must ensure that curriculums are well designed and implemented consistently well. This is so that pupils across the school know and remember more.
- Leaders have not designed a mathematics curriculum that builds on what some pupils in key stage 3 know and can do already. Leaders must ensure that the key stage 3 mathematics curriculum allows pupils to consolidate and build on their earlier learning from key stage 2.
- Some teachers do not use assessment well to identify and address pupils' misconceptions. This means that pupils face difficulties when teachers present them with more demanding content. Leaders must ensure that teachers use assessment to identify and address pupils' misconceptions fully so that pupils can apply earlier learning accurately to more difficult tasks.
- In some subjects, teachers do not insist that pupils produce work of a high quality. There are times when pupils' literacy errors are not addressed, or pupils' work is incomplete. Leaders should ensure that teachers address the errors in pupils' spelling and punctuation so that pupils' work across the curriculum is of a high quality.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119813
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10110903
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	845
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Fletcher
Headteacher	Alison Chapman
Website	http://baines.lancs.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	13–14 June 2017

Information about this school

- A new headteacher was appointed in September 2017. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2018.
- There have been changes to the school's governance arrangements since the previous inspection. These changes include the permanent appointment of a new chair and vice-chair of governors.
- Since the previous inspection, leaders and governors have taken the decision to close the sixth form.
- The school currently uses alternative provision at McKee College House and Myerscough College to contribute to the education of a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- The inspection focused deeply on English, mathematics, geography and music. We met with subject leaders, pupils and teaching staff. We visited lessons and checked on pupils' work. Other subjects, such as history, art, science and French were also considered as part of this inspection.

- During the inspection, we had meetings with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and other members of school staff. As the lead inspector, I spoke with a school improvement partner and a representative from the local authority.
- We considered a range of school documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. We also reviewed minutes of the governing body meetings that have taken place since the previous inspection. An inspector considered leaders' information about pupils' attendance and behaviour.
- We spoke with representatives of the two alternative providers used by the school. We also checked on safeguarding documentation, including the checks that leaders carry out prior to the appointment of staff.
- We considered the views expressed by parents in the 21 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the comments received via the free-text facility. We also considered the 181 responses to a questionnaire for pupils and the 47 responses to a questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

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